# The Daughter of Heracles

By Matthew Gordon MacNeil

## Chapter 1

**"Those who can't fend for themselves deserve no mercy, they'd say."**

**The blow of the staff knocked her off her feet sending her crashing into the sandy dirt, teeth biting her cheek.**

**"You are lame. Worthless in many eyes."**

**A kick to the shoulders sent her rolling.**

**"The Gods have cursed you. You are Demon spawn. A half human. The list goes on. The ignorance of the average man can never be underestimated."**

**Another kick came, but this time she dodged it, catching the foot in her hand and slamming it down before it connected.**

**"Good, girl. Good."**

**BAM!**

**The staff whacked upside her head.**

**"Ugh."**

**She groaned, dazed, head throbbing.**

**"You need to anticipate where strikes will land. When they will come, and HOW your enemy means to kill you. If I was an enemy, you'd be dead."**

**The old teacher reached down, offering a hand.**

**She took it, slowly getting to her feet.**

**Seagulls flew overhead, their cries a reminder they practiced on the beach, away from prying eyes.**

**"You did well today,"**

**She looked up to her master, old Petros smiling down, clouded eyes penetrating into her.**

**"Thank you."**

**"You will get better in time."**

**"Do you think so?"**

**"You are the daughter of Heracles, I do."**

**Petros nodded, his confidence touching.**

**Hardly anyone else believed in her, not even her mother. She blamed her for her father's death, even when the Centaur Chiron tried explaining to her Heracles's death was due to a choice to sacrifice himself, not ill luck brought on from a 'monstrous child' as she believed.**

**And her siblings shared this view, avoiding her whenever possible, ignoring her when they could not.**

**Only Petros, Chiron, and Pan believed in her, treated her like a normal person, to all others she was subhuman, not worth any sort of respect.**

**And the reason? One of her feet was turned inward, clubbed. Chiron did his best to heal it at birth, but could only straighten it a bit with his Magic.**

**It made it hard to walk, but over the years she managed to learn to overcome this obstacle without using crutches or riding a horse everywhere she went.**

**And now Petros was training her in the fighting craft, following a month of her hounding him to give her a chance. Today would mark her second year of training.**

**"Kyra."**

**He said suddenly, bringing her out of her bitter memories.**

**She looked up at him.**

**"Yes?"**

**"Shall we continue?"**

**He held up the staff, knocking it against her wooden sword.**

**She nodded and went back into position, wiping the sweat from her forehead, beginning to feel the heat.**

**The sun, bright, almost white in the sky, shone down, giving off life sustaining light, but also causing everyone outside to feel the intense heat.**

**"Come at me. Try to get under or above the staff."**

**Kyra gripped the handle of her sword and went to work, moving towards Petros, taking another breath and focusing her vision on his chest, zeroing in on the spot she'd target.**

**She came at him with surprisingly speed, able to move lightly on her feet thanks to the hours of training he'd given her, and yet it made little difference.**

**Petros, a veteran of wars under the Argive Kings, blocked her strikes, beating down each one with efficiency and skill.**

**"Come now,"**

**He said through clenched teeth,**

**"You can do better Kyra. Do better!"**

**"I'm trying!"**

**The wooden sword smacked against the staff, bouncing off, and Petros swung it around, cracking it against her knee caps, dropping her.**

**Spitting out sand Kyra balled up her fists.**

**"Dammit."**

**"You're learning."**

**"Not fast enough!"**

**"Everyone has their own pace."**

**"My father---"**

**"Your father was the son of Zeus, and even Heracles was not a mighty warrior overnight. He trained for months under Chiron, and many a time landed on his face just as you do now."**

**Petros prodded her to get up, to continue training, but Kyra felt defeated and refused.**

**"Let me lie here."**

**She said.**

**"I'm useless."**

**"Foolishness. Get up."**

**"I'm nearing my eighteenth year and I'm not good for anything."**

**"Yes, yes. I've heard the speeches before. I heard the excuses before. You allow your handicap to hold you back yourself. Get up and fight me Kyra."**

**"I allow it to hold me back?"**

**This set her off, anger burning.**

**"I'm the one? It is others who judge me. Others who believe the Gods hate me. Not myself."**

**"But you allow those thoughts to enter your mind. To fester and grow, like a virus. A weed which encircles itself around your mind."**

**Kyra rose, her emotions running high, turning her feelings of defeat into bitterness.**

**She lashed out, wooden blade smacking in solid blows against the staff, the clacking sound echoing over the beach.**

**Petros sidestepped a strike, swept his leg out and tripped Kyra, again she hit the sand.**

**"Do not give in to your anger."**

**He instructed.**

**"Control it. It does not make you stronger. It blinds you and leaves you open to attacks such as this."**

**"I can't do it."**

**"So long as you are my student, you will try."**

**With that the old man helped her up and set her upon him again, staff moving swiftly to stop whatever attacks she made, until finally Petros decided it was time to end training for awhile.**

**Leaving the beach the two headed back to the small farmhouse the elderly warrior owned, a plot of land in his family for over two hundred years.**

**It wasn't much, literally just a stone made house with a thatched roof, and a field full of wheat and a garden, but it was enough for Petros.**

**Kyra, sore muscles aching, took her time in reaching the house, head bowed in thought.**

**As he held the door open for her Petros asked her what was on her mind.**

**Kyra looked up at him, her dark brown eyes showing her uncertainty.**

**"Will I ever become as great as my father?"**

**Petros smiled, warm and reassuring.**

**"Only the Gods might know child. But, if you continue as you have been, I believe you'll be great in your own right."**

**Touched by his answer Kyra smiled back and headed inside where he fetched them a meal of cheese, homemade bread, and cups of water.**

**Ever since becoming his apprentice Petros allowed Kyra to live in his home, knowing it would be better for her rather than**

**letting her stay with her mother and brothers and sisters, she didn't need the neglect or abuse they routinely dished out.**

**His wife, Elpinice, had died the year before he took Kyra in, and as they had no children of their own, it gave him both the chance for company again and a chance to take on the role of father figure.**

**Heracles' death wasn't Kyra's fault, any rational minded person knew this to be true, but those with prejudice were quick to cast blame on the deformed child, even those supposed to love her most.**

**Taking his role of guardian with utmost seriousness Petros did his best to educate her in ethics, religion, and most importantly, respect for everyone, regardless of their station or other aspects in their lives.**

**"Chiron will be here in the evening,"**

**Petros mentioned as he washed down the last of the cheese,**

**"He told me he has something to tell us."**

**"Do you know what it is?"**

**"He mentioned a man named Jason of Iolcus, but other than that nothing. I've heard of Jason, the son of Aeson. He's the Iolcan King."**

**"The King of Iolcus."**

**Kyra said with a hint of fascination. Her ancestors on her father's side had been Kings of Argos and included such**

**illustrious figures as Perseus, the slayer of Medusa and rescuer of Andromeda.**

**"From rumours I've heard he lost his wife in an assassination plot some weeks ago and now seeks a way to bring her back to life."**

**"Hades would never allow it."**

**"Some say with the right Magic even the God of the Underworld cannot stop a person."**

**Kyra wasn't sure she believed that part. How could someone cheat death? Spirits did linger on earth after they passed, but they could never reenter their bodies.**

**Could they?**

**"Get some rest,"**

**Petros said gently,**

**"Chiron will want us both to listen to this tale of his."**

**Grateful for her master's permission to nap, Kyra pulled herself away from the table and went to her bedroll, quickly curling up beside her pet cat Cleo and falling asleep almost immediately.**

**Chiron was the leader of the Centaurs of Argos, the half human, half horse sons of Centaurus from whom they took their name, and descended from the God of War, Ares.**

**With a human upper half, with long, coarse black hair almost like a horse's mane and thick beard, Chiron was handsome and youthful looking despite having been alive for two centuries already.**

**His lower half was that of a black stallion, legs strong and muscled, allowing him to run down any enemy or animal he wished.**

**Petros and Kyra sat outside with him as they ate supper, the Centaur too big to fit into the house, and three discussed everyday things for awhile, Chiron asking Kyra about her training and if she felt confident in her abilities.**

**It wasn't until after they ate and the food had settled that the Centaur leader cleared his throat and began telling them of his reason for coming.**

**"As I've mentioned before to you Petros, the King of Iolcus is seeking a way to retrieve the soul of his deceased wife from Hades."**

**"Yes. An impossible task."**

**"Jason is a stubborn man. He won't accept impossible for an answer, his love for Larisa is all consuming and he's willing to search the earth if it means getting her back."**

**"What does this have to do with us?"**

**Kyra asked, immediately regretting her decision of doing so, seeing Petros frowning at her from the corner of her eye.**

**"Well,"**

**Chiron chuckled,**

**"The King has sent me to recruit a child of Heracles for his adventure. He believes with Heracles' offspring beside him he is bound to achieve his objective."**

**"Why's that?"**

**Kyra questioned, failing to see how the Iolcun King could draw that conclusion.**

**"Well, your father did complete twelve labours did he not? Twelve tasks he wasn't even meant to be able to complete but did. Jason is hoping his children carry the same abilities he did."**

**"Have my brothers agreed to go?"**

**Chiron looked at Petros, the old man avoiding his gaze.**

**"They don't know. I never asked them."**

**"Huh?"**

**"Your brothers lack your father's spirit and courage Kyra."**

**"But---"**

**"They don't have it. I trained your father remember? Your brothers lack his spirit in the most basic of ways."**

**Kyra stared at the Centaur, unsure what to say to this. How could it be that her brothers didn't possess their father's spirit, as Chiron put it, but she did? Despite what everyone always told her?**

**"Its not possible."**

**She said shaking her head, disbelieving.**

**"Look at me."**

**"Looks can be deceiving."**

**Chiron glanced at the sky.**

**"For instance some people believe the sun, guarded and protected by Holy Helios and Apollo, is pulled by the former's chariot. But, in truth, it is a round ball and it is the world that moves around it."**

**"I fail to see---"**

**"You said 'look at me', as if how you appear is any indication of who you truly are. Yes, you were born unlike others, but does that make you less worthy, less important by default? Only a fool would believe so."**

**The Centaur took a drink of his wine.**

**"Neither I nor you are fools."**

**To that Kyra had no response and so, knowing better than to argue with someone like Chiron, she stayed quiet, listening instead.**

**"Jason believes,"**

**Chiron told Petros,**

**"That the Golden Fleece can bring Larisa back."**

**"Why?"**

**"Its Magical power transcends dimensions. With it Jason believes he can enter Tartarus and bring her back to the mortal world."**

**"Can he?"**

**"Its possible. However, he needs to find those who possess the Blood of the Gods to uncover it."**

**Kyra gasped.**

**That was why the Iolcun King needed her or one of her siblings, as they were the grandchildren of Zeus, King of the Gods.**

**Chiron smiled and nodded.**

**"Yes, you are to be his first descendant. Next comes a descendant of the Goddess Athena, though he has no idea where to find her so he intends to ask the Oracle at Delphi where to look."**

**"The Oracle."**

**Kyra looked at Petros, the older man in awe at the mention of the Pythia, Lord Apollo's Prophet and the greatest Seer in all of the Greek world.**

**"She is his best bet. His own seers on Iolcus haven't been able to discover where they may be."**

**Kyra didn't know what to do. She believed Chiron wouldn't lie or mislead her, but she failed to see what he saw in her, teacher of her father or not.**

**"He'll be arriving here tomorrow,"**

**Chiron announced, preparing to leave,**

**"I'll be here when he does."**

**They said their goodbyes and the Centaur rode off into the night, Kyra watching him go before looking up at the Moon, wondering what Selene, the Moon Goddess, thought looking down on them.**

**Jason of Iolcus was nothing like Kyra expected.**

**He was not a frail, half chubby man she imagined in her mind, like Petros, who disliked most Kings, depicted many in stories he told her as a child, but a strong young warrior.**

**His tawny hair, long and rich, blew wildly as he walked up the beach from his ship, his golden armour, engraved with a Dragon on the left breast, glistened under the sun's light.**

**His beard, barely little more than a shadow, a sign he shaved recently, was black but Kyra suspected it would match his hair once grown out more.**

**Alongside the King walked Aion, his best friend and personal bodyguard. Petros said Aion was Jason's maternal cousin.**

**"Hail to you Chiron."**

**The King said, raising his hand in greeting to the Centaur, who bowed his head respectfully in turn.**

**"Hail to you, King Jason. It is a pleasure to see you again."**

**"Likewise old friend."**

**They clasped hands tightly.**

**"How was your voyage? Well I trust?"**

**"It went well, all things considered. Aion, however, found it rather difficult on his stomach. Didn't you cousin?"**

**The other man smiled ruefully, unable to meet the Centaur's gaze. Jason chuckled and turned his attention to Kyra and Petros.**

**"And this must be the daughter of Heracles you mentioned, and her guardian Petros."**

**Jason smiled at Kyra, bowing his head. Aion's eyes locked instantly on her foot, she saw his mouth twitch slightly before following his friend.**

**"It is an honour to meet you. Your father was a good friend of mine, and a great warrior."**

**"Thank you my Lord."**

**Kyra bowed in turn but Jason waved a hand gently,**

**"You are descended from Kings yourself, of the line of Perseus. Don't feel the need to bow to me."**

**"She knows her place,"**

**Aion said approvingly,**

**"It is a good thing."**

**"Her place?"**

**Jason frowned,**

**"Excuse Aion, he's spent too much time in the royal court back on Iolcus. His mind is filled with nonsense."**

**Hit by this rebuke Aion held his tongue, resuming a stoic pose. Kyra wondered how he felt about her even going on the expedition.**

**"Have you heard from Pan?"**

**Chiron asked suddenly, cutting into the awkwardness of the situation.**

**"Has he agreed to join us?"**

**"Pan?"**

**Petros was surprised, they hadn't heard from the Satyr God in months. He was off doing only he knew what, now Chiron mentioned him in connection with this quest?**

**"Yes, he was quite interested in joining the last time we spoke."**

**Chiron smiled,**

**"You know Pan. Anything that'll make a good ballad or tale in future is sure to rouse his interest."**

**That was true enough. Pan lived for adventure and good stories. He traveled all over Greece to discover new things and people, so it wasn't at all surprising to Kyra he'd find a way to join the King's quest.**

**Chiron nodded to Jason.**

**"He did. He said he'll meet you at Delphi."**

**"Good,"**

**Jason said,**

**"I need all the allies I can recruit. Petros,"**

**The King stepped forward towards the older man,**

**"Do you have any food? I hate to impose on you but our pantries are thin and we haven't eaten since breakfast."**

**At first Kyra thought Petros would refuse, the sour look that came over his face made her hold her breath. But he gestured to Jason to follow.**

**Thank the Gods he wasn't difficult today!**

**Going back to the house Petros and Kyra shared the old warrior served up the King of Iolcus and Aion some cheese, beef, and bread, which both men wolfed down gratefully.**

**To Kyra watching them eat such 'common' food was funny to say the least. She expected Aion at any rate to turn his nose up at it, but he ate it without complaint and seemed to enjoy it.**

**Once they finished eating Jason explained why he wanted Kyra to accompany the expedition to find the Golden Fleece, specifying her lameness didn't bother him in the least and that he trusted her abilities because Chiron trusted them.**

**"He believes you have your father's spirit and his talent. I'm willing to put my trust in you."**

**The King said it with such conviction that, despite herself, Kyra got emotional. It was rare anyone beyond Petros, Chiron, or Pan gave her reassurance. She smiled in thanks, not wanting to choke up.**

**The group talked into the night of Jason's goals. He aimed to find the descendants of three different Gods. Zeus, Athena, and Hestia.**

**Having found Zeus' descendant, he needed to track down the others which, while not impossible, was made difficult by the fact that not much information existed on either of the two Goddesses bloodlines.**

**Hestia, the sister of Zeus, lived on earth, she had for centuries, but Jason knew not where. He could either find her herself or one of her descendants, he'd ask the Pythia for information regarding both.**

**With Athena, the Goddess of Wisdom would not answer his prayers, believing that the dead should stay dead. He did not fault her for this belief, a respect for the natural cycle of life, but one he would not live by. Therefore he needed the Oracle's help.**

**When sleep was almost on her Kyra excused herself from the table and headed for bed. She thought of  what lay ahead, a mixture of excitement and fear, and hope.**

**Hope that she could prove her worth, and show anyone who looked down on her she could live up to her father's legacy.**

## Chapter 2

**The next morning Kyra, following Jason and Aion, boarded their ship, the Argo, named after its Captain, Argos, who had served under the King's father and now served faithfully under him.**

**An old sailor with a good sense of humour but an equally strong temper, Argos welcomed Kyra without any hesitation. He told her he revered her father as a great hero and that he was proud to sail alongside one who carried his blood.**

**Flattered, and even more worried she wouldn't be able to live up to expectations, Kyra thanked him and quickly followed Jason down into the lower deck.**

**Here he showed her to her room.**

**Spacious and already equipped with a bed.**

**She spent the majority of her time on the ship during the journey to Delphi in her room, feeling too awkward to venture out and make conversation with her crewmates, even Chiron.**

**They reached the island of Delphi within a week, its shores covered in thick grey mists on the morning they arrived.**

**Kyra, stepping up on deck to look at it, asked Chiron why it was like that.**

**"The Pythia,"**

**He explained, pointing to the shoreline,**

**"Uses the powers gifted by Apollo to obscure the island from those who may wish to do her and the priestesses who work under her harm. The fact we can see the island despite the mist is proof Jason's intentions are good."**

**Kyra looked back to shore, seeing a mountain's top slowly emerging, a Temple coming into view.**

**"The Temple of Apollo,"**

**Chiron said with awe,**

**"Built by the people of Delphi in honour of the God of the Sun and Music after he saved their island from the dreaded Dragon Python three hundred years ago. Its the greatest place in all of Greece if you wish to learn the skills of prophecy and divination."**

**"Have you been here before?"**

**"Twice. Once as a small boy when my father came to find out the fate of a sick relative. The second as a young man just barely growing my first chin hair. That time I came for myself, to ask what direction my life would take."**

**"And what did the Pythia say?"**

**Kyra could listen to Chiron talk all day. His voice, like all Centaurs, was calming, almost music like, smooth and elegant.**

**"Its a misconception the Pythia can tell people their fate,"**

**Chiron watched two dolphins leap out of the water in front of the Argo, their grey bodies disappearing beneath the waves as quickly as they appeared.**

**"She possesses no such ability, neither do the Moirai as many people believe. The Pythia sees threads, possible paths and options open to each individual spun by the Moirai. Each person has thousands and thousands of threads in their lives. She can guide you to what may be best for you, but she can't tell you which path to go, only you can decide that."**

**Kyra didn't know what to say to Chiron so she stayed silent. It certainly clashed with what Petros and others had told her growing up. The Moirai decreed all fate, whatever happened in life was by their design even before you were born.**

**A part of her always resented them for how they spun her thread, allowing her to be born the way she was. Knowing the truth, in some small way, made her feel better.**

**At least she knew her life was her own to carve, not a group of distant Goddesses who would never meet her.**

**No sooner did she complete this thought than the Argo landed at the Delphi docks, the small coastal village totally unremarkable.**

**Like many villages, its homes were made of stone, thatched roofs. Cattle and chickens were everywhere, and fishermen had already begun outfitting their vessels for the day's work ahead.**

**"Alright,"**

**Jason, Aion at his side, stepped onto the deck and looked at Kyra and the Centaur,**

**"Kyra, Chiron, and I will go to the Temple. Aion, you and Argo stay with the ship, guard it with your lives."**

**"My King, are you sure?"**

**Aion wasn't at all pleased with this. He protested strongly but the King didn't budge.**

**"I trust you more than anyone,"**

**Jason said,**

**"That's why I can think of no one better to safeguard my most prized possession in this quest."**

**"Lord, please. Reconsider, you can't possibly think this cripple could do anything if you were attacked!"**

**And there it was.**

**Aion's true feelings revealed.**

**Kyra wasn't surprised, she heard it all before.**

**Still, the sting was always there.**

**Jason looked back immediately at her, the shame for Aion's word evident to see.**

**"I'm sorry."**

**He said.**

**"Aion said it, Lord."**

**Kyra shrugged,**

**"Its nothing I haven't heard a dozen times."**

**"I...I meant no disrespect."**

**Aion stuttered, realizing too late how his words would be taken.**

**"Oh yes you did,"**

**Chiron snorted,**

**"I propose a solution, if you would hear it your majesty."**

**"Of course Chiron, tell us."**

**The Centaur trodded to the center of the deck, pointing at both Kyra and Aion,**

**"I propose these two fight for the privilege of escorting you to the Temple. Let Kyra show what she's learned at Petros' feet. If she loses she can guard the Argo."**

**"I cannot fight a woman! Much less one in her condition!"**

**Aion said, disgusted by the mere thought of it.**

**"Don't let your pride make you a fool, Aion."**

**Chiron chided,**

**"Kyra isn't weak like you seem to think."**

**"Chiron I---"**

**"You can do it."**

**Chiron nodded towards her.**

**"Have confidence in Petros' teachings and yourself. Remember, you are the daughter of Heracles, granddaughter of Zeus!"**

**"Aion,"**

**Jason regarded his friend coolly,**

**"I order you to fight if Kyra wants to. You were careless with your words far too often for my liking."**

**"Sire I---"**

**"You will fight."**

**Accepting his Lord's command the Iolcun soldier took up his position and waited.**

**Unsure if she could win Kyra decided to swallow her fear and accept the challenge, knowing neither Chiron or Jason would allow any true danger to befall either of them.**

**She brought her sword out of its sheath and took up position opposite of Aion, and waited.**

**It was a mistake she regretted.**

**Aion's speed was unlike anything she'd ever seen, his feet moved like a blur, almost as fast as she imagined Hermes to move, his sword coming at her from the side, hissing.**

**She ducked the blow and rolled, pushing her free hand to propel herself up, landing cleanly on her feet.**

**She relished the shock on Aion's face.**

**"I told you she could handle herself."**

**Chiron laughed.**

**Grunting, Aion went at her again, this time feigning an attack to the left then swinging around to strike her in the back.**

**Kyra, sensing it at the last minute, leaned forward and spun on her good foot, sword slashing his arm.**

**Aion let out a yelp of pain, blood running down his elbow, dripping onto the Argo's brown wood floor.**

**Taking advantage of this momentary slip of his concentration Kyra struck at him, cutting into his arm a second time, just below the original wound.**

**Aion fell back, gritting his teeth to ward off letting out another yelp. He glared at her, his eyes locking on her sword, angry at his blood on the blade.**

**"You bitch."**

**He said under his breath, gripping his wound.**

**Kyra heard him but she doubted Jason and Chiron did.**

**"Are you finished Aion?"**

**Jason asked.**

**"No...."**

**The Iolcun soldier let go of his arm and held his sword tight, knuckles turning white from rage.**

**"I'll win this and put you in your place."**

**Again he attacked, his speed slower, but still fast.**

**Kyra stood firm, choosing this time to take hit head on. Their swords clashed, the piercing ringing spreading out so that even fishermen and dock workers heard it.**

**Aion, furious she countered his strike, jabbed at her ribs.**

**The air went out of her on impact.**

**Kyra gagged, the pain a hollow, sickening feeling.**

**Aion's fist connected with her cheek, a mouthful of saliva flying out as she went sideways, crashing down, head bouncing off the wood.**

**Disorientated she swung herself around in time to catch his attack, kicking him in the shin before he could drive his sword down to finish her, disregarding the rules of the fight.**

**He fell back gasping in pain and she got up, snatched her sword, and lunched herself off her good foot, slamming her sword pommel into Aion's face, hitting his eyes and nose.**

**She hit so hard it broke the skin and knocked him out cold. His sword clattering to the floor.**

**Jason and Chiron clapped in applause.**

**"Argos will take Aion back to his bed,"**

**Jason said,**

**"He'll be quartered off until he calms down. As for you, we should get going. Pan should be at the Temple by now waiting for us."**

**To help Kyra make her way through the village and mountainside Chiron suggested she ride on his back. She wasn't sure about the idea at first, Centaurs weren't horses after all, but he assured her it was what he wanted, so she agreed.**

**With Jason's help she mounted him and together the three made their way through the village, Chiron enjoying the looks his appearance brought.**

**Some children waved at Kyra as they passed, one little girl even asked if she could have a ride next. Chiron told her maybe when they came back down from the Temple, which sent the children running scared, none expecting him to be able to speak!**

**They walked up the path for what seemed like hours until they reached a fork in the road marked by an owl statue.**

**Sitting underneath it playing a flute was a Satyr.**

**Light green skinned with a goat's face and feet, a thick white mane trailing down his back, the Satyr didn't notice them, so absorbed in his playing.**

**"I had a feeling he'd be playing his flute somewhere along the trail."**

**Chiron chuckled.**

**"He's never far from it."**

**"Pan."**

**Kyra said.**

**The Satyr God continued to play, his tune a sad, gentle song she heard him play many times before. He wrote it long ago when his wife, a Nymph named Echo, died of illness. He played it often to remember her.**

**"Pan."**

**She said again, and this time he looked up, his dark eyes finding hers.**

**"Ah, the daughter of Heracles, Chiron of the Centaurs, and King Jason. A pleasure to see you at last."**

**Pan wrapped his flute in a white cloth and placed it back into his brown traveling bag, standing up and slinging it over his shoulder.**

**"How long have you been waiting?"**

**Jason asked him.**

**"Two days. The villagers were kind enough to let me sleep in the local tavern free of charge."**

**"Have you been to the Temple yet?"**

**"No Lord. I wanted to make the visit with you."**

**"Then let us be off."**

**Pan fell in line behind Chiron as Jason led the way towards the Temple at the mountain's peak.**

**When they reached it Kyra gasped in spite of herself. The Temple, constructed of beautiful white marble stone, rose high, a statue of Apollo holding the bow he used to slay Python on top of it.**

**Hundreds of people from all over the Greek world waited in line to see the Oracle, the various dialects meshing together in one continuous chorus of voices.**

**When they heard the hoof clops many turned to see Chiron coming up the pathway. Centaurs rarely left their homeland of Thessaly unless it was urgent business and hardly any of these took to the sea, so for them to see a Centaur here was incredible.**

**"Look at all these people!"**

**Kyra exclaimed.**

**"Many come from far and wide to hear the Oracle's words, my young girl."**

**Pan smiled.**

**"Your own father came as a young man, eager to hear his destiny. A proud youth if ever there was one, Heracles was determined to make his mark and hoped the Pythia would tell him how."**

**"And did she?"**

**"She did. She told him that he should complete twelve tasks so that he would live long in the minds of men. Of course he**

**did, and these stories have become immortalized as the Twelve Labours."**

**"I remember hearing of them as a boy growing up on Iolcus,"**

**Jason said scanning the crowds of people,**

**"His battle against the Hydra and Nenelian Lion were my favorite tales. Such bravery and heroism. Makes me feel small in comparison."**

**"You embark on no small quest,"**

**Pan said,**

**"Indeed you embark on the greatest quest of all. To rescue fair Larisa from Hades' grasp. No greater story is there than one of True Love."**

**"Maybe so,"**

**Jason grinned at the Satyr,**

**"But I am no Heracles."**

**"Even to Heracles he was no Heracles."**

**Pan pointed towards the Temple,**

**"If I can play my cards right, I can get you through to see the Oracle faster than if we wait in line."**

**"Thank you Pan. Please do."**

**The Satyr nodded and went off, disappearing through the throng of people while the other three waited for him.**

**It took an hour but he eventually returned, followed by two Temple guards.**

**"These kind gentlemen will escort us in. Lady Medea is eager to see you Jason and you,"**

**Pan gestured to Kyra,**

**"She wishes to see what Heracles left behind."**

**"I don't know...."**

**"Come child. Medea is a wonderful woman and an even greater Oracle. She it was who told your father his possible future."**

**As much as Kyra wanted Jason to learn how to save Larisa, she wasn't thrilled at the idea of learning her own threads.**

**To her, she'd rather let life play out as it did, without any possible biases on her part directing the motions.**

**But Pan continued pressing her until she agreed to go. Chiron led the way, the people spreading out as the big Centaur trotted up to the Temple steps.**

**Once at the steps Kyra, with Jason's help, walked up the stones and headed inside, the smell of incense and, of all things, lavender, hitting her nose.**

**She heard women chanting in unison as she approached the inter chambers, lights becoming fewer which, Pan explained, was due to the Pythia's eyes suffering from years of her prophecies and conversations with Apollo.**

**"Visions take tolls on mortal eyes. There is no known reason for this. Apollo does his best to ease her pain."**

**The four of them entered the sanctum then, a dark, almost black room, where a throne was situated in the middle of it.**

**Two priestesses, dressed in white robes, stood on either side of the throne, their heads bowed. A dozen candles lit at their feet, illuminating their faces so they could be seen.**

**On the throne itself a woman sat, her legs crossed like she was conducting a meeting rather than being a religious leader.**

**"Jason son of Aeson. Kyra daughter of Heracles. Chiron of the Centaurs, and my beloved Pan,"**

**The Pythia rose from her seat, her dark red hair cascading down her back, touching the stone floor at her feet.**

**"I welcome you to Delphi. I am Medea."**

**"It is a pleasure to see you once more, my Lady."**

**Pan bowed.**

**Medea bowed in turn.**

**"Likewise. You've been away far to long. You must play for me some new songs you've learned in your recent travels when all is settled."**

**"Of course my Lady."**

**"King Jason, you've come in search of the descendants of Hestia and Athena to gain control over the Golden Fleece, have you not?"**

**"I have, my Lady."**

**"A great task you wish to undertake. To bring back your wife."**

**"Yes. She...She was taken too soon."**

**"On your wedding day too, no less.  Cut down by an ex lover's blade just as she was to say her vows before Aphrodite in a fit of jealous rage."**

**Jason sighed heavily, the memory bringing the raw pain he still felt.**

**"Can the Fleece do it, my Lady? Can it be used to bring Larisa back to me?"**

**"It can,"**

**The Pythia confirmed as she moved closer to them,**

**"But like all things of this nature, it comes with a price."**

**Apollo's Oracle stood before Jason, taking his chin in her hand, studying his eyes, searching his soul to see his resolve.**

**"No mortal can walk the Afterlife realms untouched. Hades will send his minions after you, souls may try and latch onto you to escape back into the world of the living. And like Orpheus decades before, you may find you cannot get your love back, driving you to madness. Knowing this, do you wish to continue down this path?"**

**There was no hesitation.**

**"Yes my Lady. With all my heart yes."**

**"Then listen closely."**

**Medea turned back to her throne,**

**"You will find the descendant of Athena in Mycenae, fighting in the city's Arena as a Gladiator. His name is Atreus of Crete."**

**She sat back down, her eyes looking on Kyra.**

**"You will find Hestia and her grandson, Belos, in Egypt, where the Goddess has taken up residence to get away from the Court politics of Olympus."**

**With this information in hand Jason thanked the Oracle and began to leave, but she called back to him.**

**"Jason, I caution you,"**

**She said,**

**"Remember to always be vigilant in the world of Gods and Magic. Tartarus and its denizens do not take kindly to human interlopers."**

**"I understand. Thank you my Lady."**

**Taking the words to heart the King left, his friends behind him.**

## Chapter 3

**Mycenae, the greatest Kingdom in all of Greece, its Kings the overlords of the other States and tribes, their title hard won in a succession of wars.**

**The current King, Pausanias, earned the nickname 'Break Spear' as a youth during his father's campaign against Ithaca, hurling himself at the enemy shields, breaking their spears on his armour and slicing them up with his sword.**

**Jason knew him, if only in passing, and he warned them all it would be hard to convince him to release a slave into their custody, descendant of Athena or not.**

**Gladiators, while prized for their skills by their owners, were still viewed as subhuman by the general Greek, and Mycenae's people were no different. Gladiators had only one purpose to them, win glory in the Arena for their viewing pleasure, or die a messy death to please their blood lust.**

**Knowing the difficulty that waited them the Argonauts, as Pan dubbed them, set off to the Kingdom of Pausanias, Chiron hopeful they'd be able to convince the King to do the right thing, though Jason didn't hold his breath.**

**A week after leaving Delphi the Argo arrived in the port of Mycenae, immediately set upon by guards who questioned Argos, the elderly shipmaster pointing them in Jason's direction.**

**Jason, for his part, conducted himself well, explaining the situation to them and asking to see the King.**

**The guards agreed and brought the Iolcun King and his friends before Pausanias, who was busy devouring a piece of ham dipped in honey when they arrived in his presence.**

**The Mycenean royal court, true to its warrior image, lacked the finer qualities other courts possessed. For instance there was no finery, no lavish carpet designs or beautiful sculptures one could find in the palaces of Knossos on Crete or in the Kingdom of Argos where the legendary Perseus once ruled.**

**Here warriors held sway, and as such only the practical, bare bones designs would do, though it seemed Pausanias did allow this rule to slack when it came to food.**

**"My lord,"**

**One of the guards announced, bowing low,**

**"I present to you King Jason of Iolcus, son of Aeson."**

**"Thank you Timon, you may go."**

**Grateful to be excused the two guards retreated from the room at once, leaving Jason and the others to face the King alone.**

**"What brings you here Jason?"**

**"I seek one of your slaves."**

**The Iolcun King said plainly.**

**"Do you?"**

**Pausanias smiled uncertainly.**

**"Why is that?"**

**"He is a descendant of Goddess Athena. I need him to find the Golden Fleece."**

**"The Fleece? Ah yes, I've heard you were on such a quest. I never imagined you'd find your way to Mycenae."**

**"Neither did I your Majesty,"**

**Jason nodded,**

**"But the Gods led me here. I would not ask this of you in any other circumstance, as I believe Kings should respect each other and how they rule, but I must insist."**

**"You insist do you?"**

**Pausanias chuckled, like he was talking with an old friend.**

**"Jason, why do you trouble yourself so much over this woman? Surely there are many, many others who'd eagerly run to your bed?"**

**Kyra shook her head in disgust at this remark, Pan and Chiron grimaced at the tastelessness of it, but Jason remained calm.**

**"Larisa is special. I don't expect someone like you to understand your Majesty, as....rough cut as you are."**

**"Fair enough. Romance is an acquired taste I suppose. One I was fortunate enough never too. Who is the person you seek?"**

**"Atreus of Crete."**

**"My best Gladiator. Of course, I should've known the man was more than a simple mortal by the way he fights."**

**The Mycenean King finished off his food and drank his wine. When it was done he stood up, stretched, and stepped down to stand face level with Jason.**

**"I'm willing to hand him over to you on one condition."**

**"Which is?"**

**"You defeat him in combat."**

**"That's absurd!"**

**Pan protested.**

**"Really? I thought Satyrs were supposed to have good senses of humour."**

**"Our humour,"**

**Pan snorted,**

**"Is not one of dishonour. You mock the honour of Jason and his band of Argonauts."**

**"Argonauts? Is that the silly name you go by?"**

**Pausanias laughed, tempting Pan to lash out but Kyra touched his arm, calming him down.**

**"I accept the challenge."**

**"Excellent. I shall arrange it at once. It certainly beats sitting around here doing nothing!"**

**Pausanias went past Jason out the door, leaving them to wait. Jason looked at Kyra and the others, assuring them he'd be fine.**

**Chiron said he believed in him. Pan as well.**

**Kyra prayed for him. She knew Jason was capable but being cautious was best here she thought. Even Aion, quiet ever since she defeated him, urged his friend to be careful, not to be overly confident.**

**Smelling of decay, raw waste, and metallic blood, the Mycenean Arena held little romantic appeal. It was a killing ground, plain and simple, and the crowds in the stands loved every minute.**

**Jason, stripped down to an loincloth, bronze shield and sword, walked through the gate which rolled up to allow him entry.**

**Insults instantly came down on him. Iolcun dog. Mother's Welp, and Hades' Spawn among his favorites.**

**Out of the corner of his eye Jason spotted bloodstains, marks of the last victim of Atreus. He steeled himself against any self doubt and stood firm in his conviction.**

**He would win this. He would gain the Golden Fleece.**

**He had to. Larisa deserved to be alive, her life cut short too soon.**

**Yes, he was doing it for himself, he admitted as much, but he was doing it for her too. She deserved to live a long life, to be a mother. To be a grandmother.**

**To be his wife.**

**For Larisa Jason would----**

**"Get your royal head out of the clouds."**

**He turned to see a short, slender man striding out of one of the other gates leading down into the bowels of the Arena.**

**His long red hair, braided in the style of barbarians, betrayed his cultural background to Jason.**

**Atreus may have been born in Crete, but he was a Gaul. His red hair, pale skin and braids confirming it.**

**Gauls were strong, athletic warriors, known for their battles with (and under) the Britons, who themselves were noted warriors.**

**Atreus smirked at the King of Iolcus.**

**"Lord Pausanias tells me this is to be a duel to first blood. The Gods favor you, King Jason. If it had been to the death, you would have joined your wife in Elysium."**

**The arrogance in his voice was enough to make Jason want to smash his face in.**

**He kept his anger down.**

**In the bleachers above them Jason looked, spotting Pan and Kyra in the middle of dozens of people, concerned etched on their faces.**

**Chiron, Gods love him, couldn't fit into the Arena, otherwise he would've joined the others in watching.**

**"Is that all your good for?"**

**Jason smirked,**

**"Moving your mouth? Do you talk your opponents to death? If so I can see the power you possess. Nothing kills a poor soul better than boredom and drudgery."**

**The Cretan Gaul laughed lightly, finding the humour in the insult.**

**"If you wished to see my skills, King Jason, all you needed to do was ask."**

**Jason hadn't noticed his spear before----Its zoomed past his face, missing, intentionally, by mere inches.**

**The air whisled in his ear, Atreus whipping it back into his hand and jabbing at his stomach. Jason's shield meeting it, the impact rattling his hand and arm.**

**He groaned at the pain, sharp but mercifully brief.**

**Atreus kicked up sand, momentarily blinding him. Jason heard the Gaul's feet shifting on the sand and slammed down his shield on the right side in time to stop another thrust.**

**"Ugh."**

**The rattling went up his arm again, sharper now.**

**"Enjoy the rawness of battle, my Lord,"**

**Atreus said cheerily,**

**"Its how we know we're alive!"**

**The man jumped and brought down the spear in an arch, aiming to pierce his face, obviously unconcerned if he brought death down with the blow.**

**Gritting his teeth the King of Iolcus rolled, hot sand biting into his skin as he slid on the Arena floor. Bounding up Jason rushed Atreus, sword slashing and ripping, mind struggling to remain clear.**

**For a few moments the two traded blows, sword and spear clashing against each other, chips of wood and sparks birthed in the savage melee.**

**Through it all, neither drew blood.**

**Jason, tawny hair sweat soaked, fell back to regain strength, looking Atreus over for some sign of weakness, a spot to be exploited.**

**There was none. The Cretan Gaul able to keep all points protected even while he grew exhausted.**

**"Pausanias is an ass, isn't he?"**

**Atreus said,**

**"Making us fight each other for his pleasure, and these animals,"**

**He swung his arms out, encompassing the spectators.**

**"Throw down your weapons. You've proven yourself. I'll join you."**

**Jason blinked, not sure if he heard right.**

**"What?"**

**"I'll join your quest. You proven yourself a capable warrior, King Jason."**

**"It must be first blood."**

**"Then fear not,"**

**Atreus grinned,**

**"Hit my leg as I attack now."**

**Atreus sprang at him, moving in such a way that his right leg lay exposed and Jason, understanding, cut into it, doing as little damage as possible.**

**The Gaul fell to his knees, dropping his spear.**

**The crowd roared, chanting Jason's name.**

**The Iolcun King looked up at his Mycenean counterpart, only to see Pausanias leaving his seat in disgust.**

**Jason feared he wouldn't live up to his end of the deal, but he needn't have worried. Pausanias, for all his faults, was a man of his word.**

**Atreus joined the crew of the Argo that same day, and two days later they set off for Egypt to find the Goddess and her grandson.**

## Chapter 4

**Landing in a port Kyra couldn't pronounce the name of the crew of the Argo disembarked along the Egyptian coast, Pan excitedly telling them all about the wonders and mysteries of this ancient land.**

**"Founded by a warrior King called Narmer,"**

**The Satyr God told Kyra as the two walked side by side, Jason, Aion, Chiron and Atreus up ahead,**

**"Egypt has existed longer than any Kingdom I've ever known. A true testament to Narmer's genius."**

**"Have you been here before Pan?"**

**"Long ago with Echo. She wanted to see the Nile river, the life source of the Kingdom, and of course I took her."**

**He spoke with tenderness, his eye moist.**

**"She marveled at its beauty."**

**"Was Narmer still alive then?"**

**"Gods no,"**

**The Satyr laughed, knocked out of his sadness and back into his usual upbeat self.**

**"The first King had been dead centuries at the time my girl. We did, however, meet a descendant of his, Sobeknefru, the Queen of Egypt at the time."**

**Pan went on to tell her how this Sobeknefru founded, or rather, reestablished, an institution of Magic known as the Dragon Court, where Egyptian royalty and priests alike learned spells and incantations, and how some of this knowledge transferred to Greece over the centuries.**

**It took the group several weeks to track down Hestia, the Goddess taking care to cover her tracks, and it required extensive bargaining with Egyptian land spirits to gain their help in the search for her.**

**When they finally did find her, she was making bread in a small house alongside the Nile river in Upper Egypt, passing herself off as an average Egyptian woman.**

**Her grandson, Belos, stood outside chopping wood when they approached, setting the axe down when he saw them.**

**A large man, blonde hair shaved close to the scalp, his blue eyes bright and alert. He was what one imagined a descendant of the Gods might look like.**

**He looked at Kyra momentarily, studying her limp, before making a disgusted snort and turning to look at Jason.**

**"Who are you?"**

**He asked.**

**"I am Jason, King of Iolcus. These are my friends. We've come to seek an audience with Lady Hestia."**

**"Who?"**

**"You know very well who young man,"**

**Pan smiled at him,**

**"Or should I say Belos?"**

**"Pan, leave my grandson alone."**

**They looked up to see Hestia, her silver hair in a net, leaning out of the door way.**

**"Its a pleasure to see you again."**

**The Satyr bowed.**

**"How did you find me?"**

**"The land spirits."**

**Hestia sighed.**

**"Trusting them was always a mistake."**

**The Goddess looked at Kyra and gave her only smile in the whole conversation.**

**At first Kyra was puzzled as to why but then it dawned on her that, through her father, Hestia was her great aunt, being the elder sister of her grandfather Zeus.**

**"I know why you've come, Jason."**

**She said stepping away from the house, putting a hand on Belos' to calm him.**

**"You seek the Fleece."**

**"I do."**

**"Then you've come in vain."**

**Jason stared hard at the Goddess.**

**"What do you mean?"**

**"I won't help you. I'm sorry."**

**"Why?"**

**"Because the dead belong to the dead."**

**"She was taken before her time."**

**Jason said it calmly but everyone could hear the emotion in his words, the pain he experienced.**

**"As are many,"**

**Hestia replied,**

**"Its how the world has been since the dawn of mortal existence, King Jason. The Moirai weave the threads, but even they can't see all fates or destinies. I am sorry for your loss, but your wife is gone and she cannot be allowed to return."**

**"No!"**

**Jason started forward and Belos grabbed the axe, ready to use it at a moment's notice.**

**"Larisa did not deserve to die how she did. You will help me bring her back."**

**"I will not. Neither will my grandson."**

**Kyra, heart in her throat, watched as the tension between Jason and Belos grew. The grandson of Hestia regarded the King of Iolcus with complete disdain, as something unworthy of respect.**

**"You dishonour her memory,"**

**Belos shook his head,**

**"You travel around the Greek world searching for a way to undo the natural order when what you should be doing, oh Lord King, is remembering your beloved as she was and living the life she would have wanted for you. Happy and content."**

**"You dare speak of happiness and contentment? You? Who hide away from the realm of the Gods because you have no mind for politics among the immortals? You ran away from your duties, both of you."**

**"Jason..."**

**Kyra spoke up, her voice weak, afraid to say anything, she didn't want to make him more angry than he already was.**

**"You hide in this house,"**

**Jason swung his sword up at the modest home,**

**"Away from our concerns, away from Olympus. All for yourselves. So do not lecture me about what I ought to be doing, you hypocrites."**

**The axe flew faster than Kyra could track, its hissing blade finding Jason's shoulder and sinking into it, blood shooting out of the wound.**

**"Jason no!"**

**Kyra reacted on instinct, her sword leaving its sheath before she thought better of it and Belos locked on her next, his blue eyes filled with fury.**

**Hestia did nothing to stop it, allowing her grandson to let loose his anger.**

**Jason staggered back, Aion running up and gripping his shoulders while Kyra went forward to face Belos, the man with a quarter of divine blood drawing a dagger on his belt.**

**His arm whipped across Kyra's cheek, her reflexes saving her left eye from being slashed. She jumped to the side of him and thrust, Belos lurching backward, steadying himself.**

**"You're parents failed both of us."**

**He mocked, coming at her again in a bull rush----**

**Stopped by Chiron, the Centaur's large body crashing into him with all his might, knocking Belos off his feet, throwing him face first into the sands.**

**Hestia stepped in front of her fallen grandson, preventing the Centaur from bringing his hooves down on his head.**

**"Stop Chiron. Enough."**

**"He attacked my friends,"**

**The Centaur snorted,**

**"Move aside."**

**"Stand down. No matter what you do here we will not help you. The Golden Fleece will not be used to reverse the natural order of things."**

**Chiron shifted, the muscles in his lower body tensing. He wanted so much to stomp the life out of Belos, but he let go of his anger and backed off.**

**Hestia helped Belos to his feet, whispering into his ear, though none could hear what she said.**

**When she finished her grandson removed himself from them, heading back inside and closing the door behind him.**

**Hestia approached Jason, his wound still bleeding profusely, and placed a hand on his shoulder.**

**"Let her go, Jason."**

**She said as her touch stopped the blood and removed the wound as if it had never been.**

**"Cherish the moments you had together, relish them. But let her go and allow Larisa to rest in peace. She won't be able to do that if she knows you hurt."**

**"I..."**

**"Remember her love for you, and carry on. Your people need you. Take care of yourself."**

**Nodding to the rest of the party the Goddess of the Hearth retraced her steps to the house and went inside, leaving them all to let her words settle.**

**Jason, held up by Aion, did not say a word.**

**"What do we do now?"**

**Kyra asked Chiron.**

**The Centaur frowned down at her,**

**"There are other descendants of the Gods, but we would need to return to the Oracle to discover them."**

**"A path full of more adventures,"**

**Pan looked off into the distance,**

**"But a hollow one. Hestia's words were true, as much as it pains me to say so. Life and death, a cycle which must be respected."**

**"You're a silver tongued liar."**

**Aion snapped,**

**"Eager for travels but when things difficult you surrender. And you!"**

**He pointed at Kyra,**

**"Your curse brought this upon us."**

**"Leave her. Tend to Jason."**

**Chiron's warning did little, Aion continuing his verbal abuse, emboldened by the fact that Jason did not stop him, failing to realize the King's sorrow.**

**"Can't you see it? Our luck has been foul ever since she came into it. First Pausanias making Jason prove himself, weakening his strength. Now this? Don't tell me this isn't a sign from the Gods to us Chiron."**

**The Centaur denied this, stating the foolishness of it and told Aion to put his prejudices aside, now wasn't the time.**

**But the Iolcun did not listen.**

**"I challenge you to a duel to the death."**

**He said to Kyra.**

**"Once you're removed, the Gods will look favorably upon us once again."**

**"Don't."**

**Pan cautioned Kyra against it.**

**"You've no need to prove yourself."**

**"Yes she does."**

**Aion placed a dazed Jason gently on the ground and drew his blade.**

**Kyra, fearing what might happen if she didn't accept this challenge, consented and asked Chiron and Pan to step back.**

**"Think for a moment dear boy,"**

**Pan tried speaking with Aion reasonably,**

**"What good will this accomplish? Hestia did not turn us down due to Kyra's supposed lameness. She turned us down because of the natural order. Were you not listening?"**

**"Its a test! A test of faith."**

**He said the words like it was the only conceivable truth. Nothing else would sway his mind.**

**Kyra swallowed her fear and watched him come.**

**Their swords clashed in a heated exchange of blows, one parrying the other and visa versa.**

**Aion kicked out, striking Kyra's upper thigh.**

**Stumbling back the Daughter of Heracles regained her footing and leaped forward again, sword slamming down on Aion, a loud metal rattling echoing as he blocked with his own weapon.**

**A swift punch burst saliva from Kyra's mouth. Letting out a groan she fell to her knees, Aion's sword coming down---**

**Kyra's elbow driving into his stomach. He gasped for air and as he absorbed the pain she slashed down, opening up the right side of his chest.**

**Aion, taken by surprise, fell back, his body crashing to the sandy ground, blood running down his stomach, mingling with the dirt.**

**The bodyguard laid stunned, confused as to how this could happen to him. In his mind this was an impossibility.**

**Kyra sheathed her sword, she had no wish to take Aion's life no matter how much he despised her.**

**"Finish it."**

**He moaned.**

**"Put an end to it."**

**"Come now, dear boy."**

**Pan walked over and scooped the bleeding man up, carrying him over to Chiron and placing him on the Centaur's back.**

**Jason, out of his daze, asked Kyra if she was alright. When she confirmed she was, the King of Iolcus, resigned to what Hestia told him, ordered them back to the Argo, their quest at an end.**

**In the coming years Pan, ever the teller of tales, used the true adventures of the Argonauts to weave a brilliant legend. One in which Jason did achieve the Golden Fleece and overcame death, bringing Larisa back to him.**

**In this tale, told by the Satyr God around the halls and camp fires throughout Greece, Heracles himself took part, united in common purpose with his friend Jason and those who sailed under him.**

**This revised version was approved by Kyra who wished to remain out of the story, preferring a life of quiet than one of heroic legend and combat, which she feared would be her lot should Pan tell the true story of the Argonauts.**

**So it was that Kyra faded from the minds of men, living the life she wanted away from prying eyes, remembered only by those who knew her.**